SENATE RULES COMMITTEE
November 5, 1973
105 VCU-LINO

(On Friday, November 16, 1973, I went to the office of Mr. Joe O'Leary, Room 301, Old Senate Office Building, where I was allowed to read and transcribe, but not to xerox, the following testimony given by Representative Jerry Ford on November 5th, 1973--Jim Lesar)

THE CHAIRMAN--Now, Mr. Ford, it has been stated that as a member of the Warren Commission you voluntarily accepted constraints which all the members of the Commission accepted, providing that you would not publish or release any proceedings of the Commission.

You did, however, in association with another, publish a book and provide material for a Life magazine article on the proceedings of the Commission. Do you feel this was a violation of your agreement?

MR. FORD. To the best of my recollection, Mr. Chairman, there was no such agreement, but even if there was, the book that I published in conjunction with a member of my staff who worked with me at the time of the Warren Commission work--we wrote the book, but we did not use in that book any material other than material that was in the 26 volumes of testimony and sold to the public generally.

THE CHAIRMAN: The committee has been advised thatyyou were paid $5,000 for the Life article, $10,000 by Simon and Schuster for the book, $3,000 by Ballantyne Books for a reprint, for a total of $18,000 plus royalties. Could you tell us if these figures are correct, and what the final total was, including royalties?

MR. FORD. Well, let's take the Life article first.

It was agreed that subsequent to the publication of the Commission Report, that I would write an article for Life magazine, giving my impression as a member of the Commission, and my feeling toward the report individually, as a member of the Commission. I did write that article, it was published after the Commission report was made public by President Johnson, I did receive the $5,000 for the article, in two checks. One a $4,000 check which I divided three ways, between former Congressman John Ray of New York, who came down here voluntarily, paid all his own expenses and worked with me for 9 months in helping me in my responsibilities as a member of the Commission.

Mr. Ray, who was a very distinguished Member of the House of Representatives, had been prior to his service in the House, a member

of the--well, as I understand it, the general counsel for A.T. & T. He retired, and then when I was appointed to the Warren Commission, he volunteered his time at no expense to the Government.

Another member of my staff at that time was John R. Styles, of Grand Rapids. He came down and worked for me; I put him on my payroll at compensation just to pay his expenses while he was living in Washington and working with me on the Commission report.

I divided that $4,000 three ways: I gave Mr. Ray approximately $1,333, I gave Mr. Styles $1,333, and I kept the third share myself.

Now on the book which was published, the name of it was "The Portrait of An Assassin." This book came out almost a year after the Commission report was filed. I felt, and my coauthor felt, that the Commission report was a sound document. I supported it then and I support it today. But it was pretty heavy reading, Mr. Chairman. So Jack Styles and I thought we could make a better, more readable presentation of the Commission's conclusions by primarily using the testimony of the witnesses themselves--and that testimony was all a matter of public record.

We made a contract with Simon and Schuster in which they advanced us, as I recall, $10,000, which Mr. Styles and I divided between us. We checked the other day with Simon and Schuster to see how well it sold, and I am told that when they got all through with publication of the book and sales they came out about $3,000 in the red. So it wasn't a best-seller, by any means.

I am not familiar with the $3,000 from Batam Books. I will check my records,but---

THE CHAIRMAN. Ballantyne, Mr. Ford.

MR. FORD. Ballantyne? Excuse me. I know we did make an arrangementfor a paperback publication, but if my recollection is accurate, we had minimal benefits from that--far less than $3,000. I will check the records and supply the Committee with whatever the facts are.